

What is polypharmacy and why is it bad?

You have polypharmacy if you regularly take five or more medicines.

We know that taking too many medicines can come with certain risks, such as taking the wrong dose of a medication. We also know that many medicines given to older adults have side effects.

Will reducing medications improve my health?

We don't know if stopping or reducing medicines will improve your health and/or reduce these side effects.



Do you get your medications through VA mail order?

If you receive your VA prescriptions by mail, please contact the VA pharmacy as you prepare to discharge from your rehab facility. Confirm with the VA pharmacy that your mail order medications are scheduled to be filled correctly when you return home.

VA TVHS Pharmacy: 1-866-786-9367

Additional Resources

Nursing Home Information

www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare/search.html

Home Medication Disposal

www.patientsafety.va.gov/veterans/medication.asp

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VA DROP A Medication Reduction Project

VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
&
Vanderbilt Center for Quality Aging



Phone: 615-875-1479

For more information visit:
<https://www.vumc.org/cqa/projects>

What is the VA DROP project?

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of reducing the number of medicines older adults take.

We also want to examine the risk of a symptom or condition returning when a medicine is stopped or reduced.




Who leads the project?

- Amanda Mixon, MD
- Sandra Simmons, PhD, Gerontologist
- Research team includes: Geriatric nurse practitioners, pharmacist, and research professionals

Who is eligible to participate?

- Currently hospitalized at VA-TVHS
- 50 years old or older
- Take more than five medicines every day
- Plans to go to a short-term rehabilitation facility before going home

What happens if I participate?

Location	What Happens
 Hospital	Medication & health related questions
 Rehab Facility	Tracking
 Home	Medication & health related questions
	Medication & health related questions

What if I am in the intervention group?

A research clinician will review your medicines carefully and propose a list that can be reduced or stopped. We will first discuss these medicines with you, and then with your healthcare provider if you agree. We will not adjust any medicines unless both you and your provider agree.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What happens if I am in the control group?**
You will receive routine care at the hospital and rehab facility. We will monitor you and ask you questions at each study timepoint.
- 2. What if I don't want my medicines reduced, should I participate?**
The final decision to reduce or stop any medicine is always up to you. Your ability to participate will not be affected.
- 3. I trust my health care provider to do the right thing with my medicines, why should I participate?**
We will not make any changes to your medicines without discussing them with you and your doctor first.
- 4. What are the risks of participating in this study?**
Your symptoms could return if a medicine is reduced or stopped. If this happens, we can work with you and your doctor to return any medicine to its original dose.
- 5. My family and/or I have memory problems, can we still participate?**
We include patients that have problems with their memory. If a patient cannot answer a question we can skip it or ask a designated family/friend.
- 6. What happens if I sign up but then decide that I no longer want to participate?**
If you no longer desire to participate, you may call us at any time at The Vanderbilt Center for Quality Aging, 615-875-1479

